

ABSTRACT

This is a study of the Management of Health Services in Jamaica to identify the challenges created for the bureaucracy in the delivery of health services, to assess the effectiveness and efficiency with which these challenges have been met and to propose a broad framework for an improved health management system.

The study provided the opportunity to test the following hypotheses: a) Health policies in Jamaica have been a reflection and product of the country's social stratification; b) Decision-making and the selection of health priorities have been determined without adequate information and analysis; c) The government administrative machinery for the delivery of health care is a product of the colonial era and lacks the dynamism needed for modernization of the health services; d) Health programs are not adequately integrated into national development programs.

The methodology used was to examine literature on the Theory of Public Administration, with emphasis on developing countries and particularly the English-speaking Caribbean, and to utilize the concepts of Systems Analysis, Elitism and Incrementalism in analysing the health policies pursued.

The concept of "modernization" was examined in depth with emphasis on the works of Fred Riggs and Third World Writers, particularly G.E. Mills, Edwin Jones, Walter Rodney and George Beckford. Against this conceptual framework, guidelines for Modernization of the Health Services were developed.

(ii)

The examination of the Health Management System comprised an analysis of the historical roots and traditional characteristics in the Management of the Health Services, the existing System of Public Administration in Jamaica and the Administration of the Health Services (specifically the Ministry of Health and Environmental Control). In the main, the analysis substantiated the hypotheses stated at the beginning of the study.

On the basis of this analysis a proposed management system for the health services was developed with the following basic components: a) an organization structure with clearly defined lines of authority and responsibility emphasizing the levels of policy determination, policy execution, normative and supportive and operational; b) the establishment of a planning mechanism supported by a relevant and timely information system, emphasizing health as part of socio-economic development, and working in close collaboration with the National Planning Agency and International Organizations; c) the development of health policies relevant to health needs; d) the provision of greater responsibility and authority to operational levels; e) the provision of an integrated system of health care based on clearly defined levels of care; f) the establishment of "institutions" to provide for greater community participation in the planning and implementation of health services.